

# Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

## DPD Public Records

Updated February 2004

As a public agency, DPD maintains a variety of documents that are available for public inspection and copying. For persons interested in inspecting or copying public documents maintained by the Department, the basic organization of DPD is given below, along with a brief description of the records maintained by each DPD service center.

Documents related to development projects are generally indexed or referenced by address. Applicable addresses can be identified from the address posted on the premises or from DPD's zoning maps and its computer-verified catalogue of established addresses. For additional information on conducting address research, please refer to DPD Client Assistance Memo (CAM) #233, *Sources for Property Information*.

Certain documents and information are deemed by State statute to be exempt from public disclosure, generally on the grounds that disclosure would violate personal privacy or vital governmental interests. Appendix A to this memo sets forth the specific categories of documents or information exempted from disclosure by state law.

Requests for documents or information should be specific and should be made to the reception staff in the area that maintains the requested records. Requests for more than a small number of documents should be made in writing. Documents will be available for inspection and copying during the City's regular business hours.

If the information requested is not available through the reception staff at the number(s) listed in this CAM, contact the Enforcement Facilitation group at (206) 684-8880. DPD will respond to all requests as promptly as possible; however, in some instances, the Department may require several days to gather the requested documents.

A photocopying charge will be imposed for all copies

of documents requested. The charge is \$0.15 per page on regular or legal sized paper. Copies of plan sheets are available from the DPD Public Resource Center (PRC) for \$5.00 per page, with a turnaround time of approximately 48 hours. The PRC is located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave., (206) 684-8467.

### Microfilm Library

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 20th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 233-5180*

DPD's Microfilm Library is located in the Public Resource Center. Hours: M, W, & F: 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Tu & Th: 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The following documents or files are maintained in microfilm form by address, approximately 4-6 weeks after a permit has been issued:

- Boiler
- Certificates of Occupancy
- Construction plans\* and permits
- Electrical plans and permits
- Elevator
- Furnace
- Mechanical permits
- Refrigeration
- Sign

\* Original plans for single family and multifamily structures built before 1974 are not available.

All of the following documents or files are maintained in microfilm form by address, approximately 24 months after application is made:

- Council Land Use files, including rezones, subdivisions, Council conditional uses, and Major Institution Master Plans
- Master Use Permit files, including variances, special exceptions, shorelines permits, conditional uses, and short plats
- Threshold environmental determinations

The Microfilm Library provides 11" x 17" paper copies of

[www.seattle.gov/dpd](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd)



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plans for \$1 per sheet, and permits for \$0.25 per sheet. Diazo (microfiche) copies are available for \$3 each.

## Electronic Records

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 19th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8880*

DPD also maintains current application information, application review information, project history, code enforcement information and a variety of other materials in computer records format. The computer data are generally accessed and indexed either by case number, project number or street address. Limited access to the DPD Permit Tracking System (PTS) is available to customers online for information on specific projects and addresses—including a current violation database—at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits).

## Accounting & Human Resources

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 18 floor, 700 Fifth Ave.*

- Accounting files and records—indexed by various methods
- Accounting Procedures, Guidelines, and Task Outlines—indexed by subject matter and number
- Budget information—files by year
- Correspondence—filed chronologically
- Personnel files and records—indexed by name (Please note that personnel records are "public records," but may be protected.)

## Land Use Policy Community Relations

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 19th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8880*

- Advisory Board files—filed chronologically
- Code enforcement litigation files—indexed by defendant name
- Code histories for Building, Mechanical, Electrical and Energy Codes
- *dpdINFO*—a monthly newsletter on planning and development issues
- Title 23 Land Use Code-related ordinances and resolution files

## Public Resource Center

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 20th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8467*

The following files and records are indexed by project number in the Public Resource Center files. Project numbers are cross-referenced by project address. Approximately 24 months after application is made, the files are microfilmed, and thereafter are maintained in microfilm form at the Microfilm Library (see page 1 of this CAM), where they are indexed by property address.

### Master Use Permit files, including:

- Administrative Conditional Uses decisions
- Certain Street Uses
- Design Review
- Environmental Impact Statements—indexed by project name
- Lot Boundary Adjustments
- Shoreline decisions
- Short Plats
- Special Exceptions
- Temporary Uses, more than four weeks
- Threshold environmental determinations
- Variances

### Council Land Use files, including:

- Council Conditional Uses
- Full Subdivisions
- Major Institution Master Plans
- Public Project approvals
- Rezones

The following public information documents are available at the Public Resource Center:

- CAMs on the following topics:
  - General Information (100-series)
  - Land Use Code (200-series)
  - Building Code (300-series)
  - Energy and Mechanical Code (400-series)
  - Grading and Drainage (500-series)
  - Housing and Zoning (600-series)
- Code Interpretations—indexed by address

- *dpdINFO*—a monthly newsletter on planning and development issues
- Director's Rules—indexed by subject matter and number
- ECA Exemption files—indexed by project number
- Environmental Impact Statements—indexed by project name
- GIS custom maps
- Historical Land Use and Zoning Code books
- Land Use Information Service bulletins (formerly known as the General Mail Release)—filed chronologically; published weekly
- Legal Building Site letters—indexed by address
- Miscellaneous public information bulletins and documents
- Zoning Committee minutes—indexed by subject
- Zoning and other Land Use Maps
- Zoning History map books—back to 1923

### **Applicant Service Center (ASC)**

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 20th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8850*

- Pre-application files--filed by address
- Application files--filed by project number

### **Review & Inspection Center (RIC), South**

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 21st Floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8950*

All of the following documents are indexed by address:

- Boiler, Furnace, and Refrigeration permits
- Computer records on Boiler/Elevator Certificates of Inspection—current validity or date of expiration. Indexed by site address and/or by building/business name.
- Construction inspection files
- Electrical Permits—indexed by permit number
- Elevator permits
- Steam and Refrigeration Licenses—indexed by license holder's last name or by customer number

### **Review & Inspection Center (RIC), North**

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 22nd Floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 684-8950*

- Construction violation files, indexed by address
- Correspondence—indexed chronologically
- Recent Building Issuance reports—indexed by month
- Special inspection files—maintained by Quality Control section
- Soils Reports

### **Code Compliance**

*Seattle Municipal Tower, 19th floor, 700 Fifth Ave.  
(206) 615-0808*

The following files are indexed by address:

- Condominium Conversion inspection records
- Just Cause Eviction complaints
- Mobile Home Park Relocation reports & plans
- Shoreline Code Violation files
- Tenant Relocation licenses and files
- Unfit building abatements
- Vacant building inspections
- Violation records for Housing and Building Maintenance, Land Use, Weed and Vegetation Ordinances

The Code Compliance unit also maintains:

- Housing/Zoning Procedures, Guidelines, and Task Outlines
- Client Assistance Memos (CAMs) on Housing and Zoning Code information

## Appendix A

Under RCW 42.17.310 and RCW 42.17.330, the following items are considered exempt from public inspection and copying:

1. Personal information in files maintained for employees, appointees or elected officials of any public agency to the extent that disclosure would violate their right to privacy.
2. Specific intelligence information and specific investigative files compiled by investigative, law enforcement and penology agencies, and state agencies vested with the responsibility to discipline members of any profession, the non-disclosure of which is essential to effective law enforcement or for the protection of any person's right to privacy.
3. Information revealing the identity of persons who file complaints with investigative, law enforcement or penology agencies, other than the public disclosure commission, if disclosure would endanger any person's life, physical safety, or property: Provided, that if at the time the complaint is filed the complainant indicates a desire for disclosure or nondisclosure, such desire shall govern: Provided, further, that all complaints filed with the public disclosure commission about any elected official or candidate for public office must be made in writing and signed by the complainant under oath.
4. Test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used to administer a license, employment or academic examination.
5. Valuable formulae, designs, drawings, and research data obtained by any agency within five years of the request for disclosure when disclosure would produce private gain and public loss. (*NOTE: Architectural and design drawings for building permits shall not be considered exempt material.*)
6. Preliminary drafts, notes, recommendations, and intra-agency memorandums in which opinions are expressed or policies formulated or recommended except that a specific record shall not be exempt when publicly cited by an agency in connection with any agency action.
7. Records which are relevant to a controversy to which an agency is a party but which records would not be available to another party under the rules of pretrial discovery for causes pending in superior courts.
8. Lists of individuals requested for commercial purposes.

9. Applications for public employment, including the names of applicants, resumes, and other related materials submitted with respect to an applicant.
10. Residential addresses and telephone numbers of employees of the department which are held in personnel records or rosters.

*NOTE: The examination of any specific public record may be enjoined if, upon motion and affidavit, the superior court for the county in which the movant resides or in which the record is maintained, finds that such examination would clearly not be in the public interest and would substantially and irreparably damage any person or governmental functions.*

## Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of **DPD Client Assistance Memos (CAMs)**, **Director's Rules**, and the **Seattle Municipal Code** are available on the "Publications" and "Codes" pages of our website at [www.seattle.gov/dpd](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd). Paper copies of these documents, as well as additional regulations mentioned in this CAM, are available from our Public Resource Center, located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave. in downtown Seattle, (206) 684-8467.